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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 003751

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PREL JO IZ

SUBJECT: JORDANIAN PM VISITS BAGHDAD

Classified By: Political Counselor Robert Ford for
reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

¶11. (U) Jordanian Prime Minister Adnan Badran, accompanied by Foreign Minister Farouk Kasrawi and Ministers of Interior, Energy and Planning, visited Baghdad the afternoon of September 10. The delegation held separate meetings with Iraqi PM Ibrahim al-Ja'afari and Deputy President Adil Abd al-Mahdi. There was a press conference following each event.

The visit was largely meant to send a signal to Arab and neighboring countries that it is time to begin direct high-level bilateral relations with the GOI.

¶12. (C) While short on substance and long on intentions, the atmospherics surrounding the visit were good with smiles all around. Slaiman Arabi, the Jordanian CDA in Baghdad, later told Poloff that discussions were general and focused on bilateral issues of trade, security and debt. Plans were made to restart activities of the Iraq-Jordan Commission and its 10 Committees, though Iraqi PM Advisor Adnan Ali termed these plans as very preliminary. The Jordanian PM extended an invitation for an official visit to Amman by PM al-Ja'afari. (NOTE: Adnan Ali stressed that the Iraqis await an official invitation from Amman.) An advisor to Deputy President Abdel Mehdi commented that the meetings went smoothly, with little discussion of details. He added that the point was made to Arab and neighboring countries that it is time to move relations forward with the new Iraq.

¶13. (C) COMMENT: Badran, Kasrawi and Arabi each expressed appreciation for the substantial logistical and security support provided by Embassy and MNF-I. On the Iraqi side, ITG disorganization was in clear evidence with Ja'afari himself arriving in his office to receive Badran 15 minutes after the Jordanian PM had arrived. Furthermore, the Iraqi PM's office, which had initially claimed to have full responsibility for the schedule, neglected to confirm the location of the meeting with Abdel Mehdi. (Septel reports further on organizational challenges in Ja'afari's office). While post was pleased to help with this important first visit of an Arab Head of Government to post-Saddam Iraq, we will press the Iraqis to assume greater responsibilities for future high-level trips of this kind.

Satterfield